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GENERAL NEWS.

Com. Tatnall has sent a statement to the Secretary of the Confederate Navy at Richmond, detailing the circumstances attending the destruction of the Merrimac, in which he throws the blame upon the pilots, who had deceived him, he says, in first promising to carry him up the James river, which they averred they could do, to a certain point, but afterwards by a quibble, declared they could not perform their promise.

A dispatch from Washington is published to allay the excitement now prevailing at the North in apprehension of danger to Washington. It states that the alarm concerning the safety of the city has not been so great as imagined, and that the regiments of troops recently called for are to be used in placing the armies already in the field in a proper state of efficiency.

The Wheeling Intelligencer says:—"The Commissioners of the State of Western Virginia, are making active preparations to lay the application before Congress. The following are the gentlemen appointed by the Constitutional Convention for this purpose: Messrs. John Hall, of Mason county; Peter G. Van Winkle, of Wood; Elbert H. Caldwell, of Marshall; Ephraim B. Hall of Marion; and James W. Paxton, of Ohio."

When the U. S. House of Representatives took up the bill giving to the colored men half of the value of the prize they brought from Charleston, the Washington despatch of the N. Y. Tribune says, Mr. Crittenden, of Ky., walked out of the House, followed by some other Kentucky members. There were but 9 votes against the bill.

The Nashville correspondent of the Louisville Journal says:—"Nashville has all the appearance of a garrisoned town. Squadrons of cavalry are continually riding in and out, and the streets are patrolled at night: while at nearly every corner, the sentry walks his 'lonely round,' and challenges all late home-goers."

Gen. McClellan writes to Secretary Stanton that, as newspaper correspondents writing from his army continue to furnish information concerning his movements, and he cannot ascertain who these correspondents are, it would be proper to hold the editors responsible for the infraction of the military rule.

The news from General Banks' column and the calling for additional troops, have produced much excitement at the North, and our exchanges from that section of country are filled with proclamations, military bulletins, and accounts of the rapid progress of volunteering.

There are many reports afloat concerning the movements of troops in the direction of Manassas, but nothing definite is known.

A correspondence has taken place between General Burnside and General Holmes, the latter of the Southern army, by which it appears that about fourteen hundred Union prisoners are to be released, many of whom have been confined for nearly a year.

The crew of the English steamer Bermuda, which was captured while trying to run the blockade, have arrived at Philadelphia, where they will be detained as witnesses until the case of the vessel shall come up for adjudication.

Two hundred thousand dollars have been appropriated by the Virginia Legislature to remove the "women, children and decrepid persons resident at the seat of government" to a place of safety. The Legislature adjourned on the 19th instant.

There has been a report at the North, mentioned in the New York papers, that the Confederates have been defeated in Corinth—but the report was not confirmed by the telegraphic despatches.

The Richmond papers contain accounts of several recent skirmishes in Giles county, Va., in which it is said the Confederates succeeded in repulsing the Federal troops, killing and capturing a number.

The Navy Department will receive proposals until the first of June for raising the sunken vessels in Hampton Roads, the frigates Cumberland and Congress.

Mr. B. L. Stuart, the well-known sugar refiner of New York, has offered to rebuild at his own expense the Sixth street church, which was destroyed in the late fire in Troy.

It is said that 500 persons in the employment of the U. S. government have been dismissed from office, upon the report of the Potter investigation committee, which is still in session.

An order has been issued by Gen. McClellan forbidding the further exhuming of bodies by the friends of those killed at Williamsburg.

The U. S. Senate has still the tax bill under consideration. A discussion took place yesterday in the House of Representatives, with regard to government expenditures, and the amount expended per diem. There was a difference of opinion as to the amount. Mr. Voorhees was severe upon Gov. Andrew, of Massachusetts.

Lemuel J. Bowden, of Williamsburg, Va., has been appointed U. S. Judge for the Eastern District of Va.

The Confiscation bill was passed in the U. S. House of Representatives, by a vote of 82 to 68.

The police of Baltimore have made some arrests of those most prominent in the riotous proceedings of Sunday and Monday.

Gen. Sigel was serenaded in Washington last night.

Numbers of troops from the North, new levies, are beginning to arrive in Washington,

MILITARY MOVEMENTS ON THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO R. R.—For several days past, Maj. Gen. Dix has been in communication with John W. Garrett, Esq., President of the B. & O. R. R. Company. When the news reached Martinsburg that a large force of Confederates were advancing towards the line of the road, there were not less than 400 freight cars and 40 locomotives at that place. It was very desirable to place these beyond danger, and it was done in the most expeditious manner. Mr. Darley and Mr. Edwards, Masters of Machinery, with their subordinates, exerted themselves to the utmost in removing this valuable rolling power. And Mr. Charles E. Ways, telegraphic operator at Martinsburg, carried off the telegraphic magnets and appurtenances, so as to prevent the enemy from using the same to their advantage.

Of the 400 cars at Martinsburg, about one half were laden with coal and marked for Baltimore, whilst 110 were filled with merchandise for the West, and contained cargoes of a valuable character. For instance: three or four cars were filled with not less than one thousand bags of Rio coffee, whilst others were packed with groceries. All these were saved, some moving East and some West—and the entire road is again open.

Owing to the heavy transportation of troops yesterday, there were no passenger trains run, except two from Washington.

In consequence of the extraordinary facilities of the road, the column of Gen. Banks has already received a reinforcement of at least 18,000 well disciplined troops at Harper's Ferry.—We have already stated that about six thousand well disciplined troops (including two Maryland regiments), have gone off, but in addition we notice large detachments of marines and sailors from the Washington Navy Yard, who have ere this reached the Ferry. Several car loads of siege guns, each weighing about six tons, have also been sent up from the Washington Navy Yard. In one of the trains for Harper's Ferry was Assistant Secretary of War Watson, Gen. Hamilton and staff, of the regular army.—*Balt. American.*

A dispatch from Washington in the New York papers says: "The repulse of Gen. Banks from the Shenandoah Valley excited the greatest surprise, because the country was kept so ignorant of his force. It turns out that, instead of having a *corps d'armee* and a large force," as the country generally has believed, he had not more than a full brigade left to him when he was attacked by the enemy. Banks repeatedly and earnestly protested against being stripped of his command; and many of his friends advised him to resign, but this he bravely refused to do. There is felt to be a heavy responsibility on somebody in this matter, and it is not just to put it all on Secretary Stanton. The President magnanimously takes the responsibility."

The wife of one of the N. Y. soldiers killed at the battle of Williamsburg, became almost crazy upon hearing the news, and committed suicide by taking laudanum.

From before Corinth, it is stated that a reconnoitering party, from Gen. Pope's command, routed, in a skirmish, three Confederate regiments, killed and wounded many, and took six prisoners.